

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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Allen's New Leaf

By Ruby Holmes Martyn

ALLEN felt sure that Miles Gurney had something special to say to him when they should reach the corner of the village street where he could linger instead of turning to go his way toward home with the other boys. The half dozen of them had walked along together from Sunday School, disregarding the fact that Miles held himself aloof from their happy interests of school and play. Yet they all knew that he simply tolerated their company because he wanted to talk with Allen when they reached the corner.

Proud as Allen was to have Miles show him this particular attention, he was not just now very comfortable about it. He didn't want any one to make a discord in this glad New Year's Day. He hoped Miles didn't intend to suggest something that would put his firm resolution to the test. At the same time he was on tiptoes of curiosity.

"I want you to come to my house this afternoon," began Miles, when the other boys had gone their way down the street.

Allen didn't dare hesitate to make up his mind. Visits to Miles' home were a great and occasional treat; there were marvelous books, and delicious candies, and the best radio in town. Yet Allen, gazing at the icy street, knew that he must refuse this invitation.

"I can't go to your house this afternoon," he said slowly. "I'm going to Rita Bradford's with one of my Christmas books, and there wouldn't be time to get to your house, too."

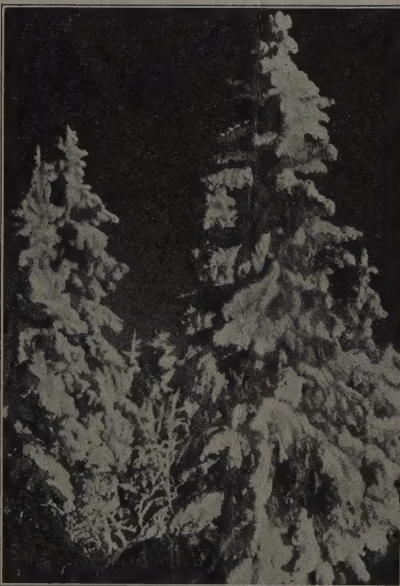
"The idea!" cried Miles, flushing with angry surprise. "You can go there any day after I'm off at school!"

It took courage for Allen to stand his ground, and it took still greater courage for him to tell Miles why he did so.

"It's right for me to go to Rita's this afternoon. I mustn't delay that," he said. "I made a New Year's resolution, and I mean to keep it. I'm going to try to write better deeds on the new leaf of this new year. When I feel sure what

it's right for me to do I'm not going to persuade and coax myself to do anything else. It's easy for me to persuade myself that the selfish things I want to do are right, and I made a resolution that I would break myself of the habit. I want to keep the new leaf of this new year written with honest, clean thoughts and words and deeds."

"But you're too fussy, altogether," sneered Miles, to conceal his own discomfort. "I must say I don't see what all that has to do with your going to Rita Bradford's instead of coming to my house this afternoon!"



Mr. and Mrs. Ghost

BY WILLIAM THOMPSON

You all have heard of Mr. Ghost,
Perhaps you've heard of Mrs.
They wear a garb of snowflakes white
Made out of fairy kisses.
They don this garb in wintertime
But change their clothes in spring
When Mr. Lark and Mr. Wren
Make wood and meadow ring.
When Nature waves her magic wand
Then comes a Fairy Queen
To change their winter overcoats
To springtime clothes of green.

Allen tried to explain.

"Yesterday morning Rita spoiled one of my very best books. She told me about it just now at Sunday School. She dropped it in a puddle of slush, and it is completely ruined. She thinks I'll never, never trust her with another book, but she won't tell me what happened to make her drop that one. So I know it was something she wasn't to blame for and that she thinks it would be mean and tattling to tell on some one else. I'm going to her house with another book so she'll know I trust her just the same as I always have!"

Miles had reddened to the roots of his black hair.

"What a rumpus to make over a book!" he ejaculated.

"But it isn't just over a book!" cried Allen. "It's because I want Rita to know that I trust her, I told you plainly!"

"Take home one of my books and forget it!" teased Miles. "We'll phone to Rita!"

"That wouldn't help us," insisted Allen. "Come along to her house with me, and you'll see what I mean."

"Like ducks I will!" flashed Miles, and, turning away from Allen, he ran toward home.

Allen was sorry indeed to think that he had failed to explain himself clearly to Miles. When he had thought over making this resolution to be quite truthful with himself in making decisions, he had supposed that keeping it would always make him feel proud and glad. And here he was feeling badly because Miles had not understood about it and rushed off in a huff. Allen had supposed that every one would greatly respect his brave stand for the right, yet Miles had left in disgust. And he valued Miles' opinions.

"But I knew what was right, and stuck to it!" thought Allen, as he went toward Rita's with his best Christmas book under his arm. It was a travel story that he was sure Rita would enjoy, and he began to feel much happier as he trudged along. The slush puddles of yesterday had frozen over, and Allen took many a little running slide as he went his way.

"O Allen! You brought this very nicest one when I didn't think you'd ever again

trust me to take one of your books!" cried Rita, meeting him at the door of her home.

Allen's heart warned, and his throat was choky. He was too happy to say a word. He had forgotten Miles, and was greatly surprised to find him inside the Bradford house.

"I came because I wanted Rita to tell you why she dropped your book in the slush puddle," faltered Miles.

"I think you better tell Allen your own self," said Rita. "You said you meant to be brave this new year."

"And I started to be a coward the very first thing!" blurted out Miles. "I never thought that I'd have to begin to be brave before I went back to school. But instead of telling Allen what happened, I ran away!"

"But you came to tell me as soon as you thought it over," Rita said gently.

Allen looked from one to the other, trying to guess what they were talking about.

"I'll tell Allen now!" cried Miles. "I threw a snowball at Rita yesterday morning when she was coming along the

street from your house, and hit her arm so she couldn't help dropping your book. I didn't think the ball would hit her just there, and I didn't know the book fell in a slush puddle until you told me when we were coming home from Sunday School."

"I wasn't really sure, that Miles did it," added Rita.

"No, I hid behind the wall when I saw I had hit you," continued Miles, red with shame for his weakness. "I told you that I was a yellow coward!"

"Forget about that, now you've straightened it out, Miles," said Allen.

"You helped me know that I must straighten it out when you stood by your own resolution. I brought Rita some books for her and you to keep to make up for the one that was ruined. But I didn't guess how happy it would make me to fix it up!"

Allen smiled. He, too, had learned that there is no greater thrill of happiness than that of writing honest, clean thoughts and words and deeds on the precious new leaf of this glad new year.

The Drummer

By Ethel M. Rice

"COME on, Al; let's go over back of the meadow and hunt field-mice tracks."

"Oh, may we go, too?" called Grace and Edith. Grace was Alfred's little sister, and Edith was the sister of Harold.

"No," answered Harold. "It's all woody over there and you girls would be scared if you heard even a leaf fall."

"We wouldn't either! We're just as brave as you are! Can't we go, please?"

"Let them come," sung out Alfred. "They won't stay long, anyhow. Girls don't like mice."

It seemed a long walk across the meadow, for although there was a crust over the snow, in many places it was not hard enough to bear the weight of the children, and they broke through time and again, sinking almost to their shoe-tops. But at last they reached the edge of the woods.

"Now let's hunt," suggested Harold. "Oh, look! I've found a track already! I'll bet it's a rabbit's!"

"Looks more like a squirrel's. Let's follow it into the bushes a little way."

Carefully the children made their way through the tangled branches. But the little footprints were hard to follow, and they soon lost sight of them.

"I wouldn't like to live in these woods in the winter, would you, Grace?" asked Edith.

"No; it's too lonesome; it's just as if

we were away off, miles from everybody."

"Let's go back," suggested Alfred. "We might get too far into the woods. We're farther in than I thought. Doesn't it seem 'booey' in here?"

"Yes," agreed Harold; "but there's really nothing to be afraid of, you know."

"B-r-r-r-r!" "B-r-r-r-r!" "B-r-r-r-r!"

"What was that?" cried Alfred.

"Oh, nothing much, I guess," replied Harold, starting hurriedly for the edge of the woods. "But — I think we'd better take the girls home. We — we must protect them, you know. Then —" he tried to appear quite brave — "we boys can come back to find out what that noise was."

Pell-mell the children dove through the bushes, never minding the scratches in their rush to get away from that terrifying noise.

Across the meadow they tore, breaking through the crust every few steps in their mad haste. Suddenly Grace gave a glad cry:

"Daddy!"

Sure enough, there was her father coming to meet them.

"You rascals!" he cried. "Don't you know it's dinner-time?" Mrs. Woodard has telephoned for Harold and Edith, too. I could see you folks over in the meadow, so I told her I'd call you. Why, what's the matter? You all look as if you'd seen a ghost."

It took only a few minutes to tell the story. When they had finished, Daddy Barlow smiled.

"Well, chickens," he said, "you needn't worry about any bear. If you had looked very carefully about you, you would have found just an old stump!"

"What would a stump be growling at us for?" asked Grace.

"Nothing growled at you, dear."

"Oh, but —"

"Wait a minute. You would have seen an old rotten stump," repeated Mr. Barlow. "And on that stump you might have seen, if you were quick enough, a big bird — a partridge — flapping his wings as hard as he could. He is very strong in his wings, and as he strikes and beats the dry wood, tiny pieces crumble and fall off. Then Mr. Partridge pokes in his bill and pulls out the tiny bugs and worms that have made their homes in the rotted wood. That noise, almost like the sound of a drum, was Mr. Partridge drumming for his dinner." Mr. Barlow patted Gracie's head. "You poor little frightened kiddies," he said.

"Pooh!" returned Alfred, "I wasn't frightened, only I thought we'd better get the girls home."

"Yes," agreed Harold. "We thought they might be scared."

Edith and Gracie just looked at each other and said nothing.

"Just a Crumb"

"PLEASE throw me a crumb — I am very hungry today,

The snowflakes have hidden my breakfast away under a big white blanket and I cannot find it;

My wings ache from flying to look for food, and my feet are so numb with cold,

If you please, just throw out a crumb for me!

"The flowers are all gone and the sky is so cold and gray.

I linger in hope that the sun may appear,

It seems such a long while till spring-time shall come —

If you please, just throw me a crumb!"

—Jewels.



Dog Lost

By CHARLES DOUBLEYOU

Say, Mister:

My dog is lost. What will it cost

For me to advertise him?

I've missed him so, these two days — oh!

You don't know how I prize him.

A pedigree? What's that to me

Besides the cheery grin within

His heart? My pet! And you can bet

I wouldn't swap him for Rin-tin-tin!

His name is Jack; his color's black

All over, 'cept his chest

And left hind foot and tip of snout —

And that is white; as for the rest,

One fore leg's lame, but gee! he's game,

And awful smart for one year old;

One eye's a sight; done in a fight. —

N-no, those ain't tears; I've got a cold.

Please fix it good; my name's Tom Wood.

No, he didn't have a collar.

Front page, you know, where it will
show;

Can you — for a quarter-dollar?

Twelfth Night

By M. Louise C. Hastings

"WHEN they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, is observed on January 6, twelve days after the date of the birth of Christ. This was the time of the visit of the Wise Men to the manger. You will remember that we are told in the great Christmas Story (Luke 2: 8-18) that as soon as the angel's song was finished the shepherds left for Bethlehem to "see this thing which has come to pass," and "found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." But the Wise Men did not appear until twelve days later.

You have all seen pictures, paintings or prints, depicting this visit of the Wise Men. There are "The Adoration of the Magi" by Memling, by Paolo Veronese, and others, all of which are very beautiful and give us each artist's conception of the presentation of gifts to the Christ Child. The artists of today are fond of painting the Star, and the Wise Men, and those, too, are beautiful, each one putting on canvas just what is in his mind.

In literature, we have the first chapters, or the first book, of "Ben-Hur," by Lew Wallace. That, also, is a beautiful

painting — a painting in words — of the journey of the three Wise Men, their meeting together, and of the visit to the manger. "We three kings of Orient are" is a vivid word painting which has been put to music.

It is still believed in the Holy Land that on the night of Epiphany Christ walks the earth again as a heavenly visitor. In certain countries of the East there are still solemn functions held on Epiphany, such as "the blessing of the waters" and "the blessing of the sea," where the people kneel in deep devotion while the litany is chanted, and a blessing pronounced.

Epiphany is supposed to end the Christmas festivities. In many homes, the tree and decorations are removed on this date, in order to observe the old-time custom.

"Down with the rosemary and bays,

Down with the mistletoe;

Instead of holly, now upraise

The greener box, for show.

The holly hitherto did sway;

Let box now domineer

Until the dancing Easter-day,

On Easter's Eve appear."

There is an old poem of the year 1540 called, "Now have Good Day," which is interesting to read aloud on Twelfth Night. It is the passing of Father Christmas, and pictures his leave-taking from the old hall and its lords and ladies, where he has dwelt "from Hallow-tide till Candlemas!"

Twelfth Night is celebrated in many different countries, and in varied ways, but one and all do honor to the Magi in some manner. In the Middle Ages, a little play called "The Feast of the Star" was given in the church. This showed the three kings, coming from three directions, meeting and offering gifts at the altar. In these days when pageantry has a large place in our church-school curriculum such a little drama might be an effective way of presenting the story to the school or church, on or near the 6th of January.

There are Twelfth Night superstitions, just as there were Christmas ones, though possibly not so many. In order to protect themselves and all their belongings for the new year, it was customary on Twelfth Night to burn frankincense in each home,

"And on the table settes a loafe, when
night approacheth here,

Before the coles and frankensence to be
perfumed there:

First bowing down his head he standes,
and nose and eares and eyes

He smokes, and with hos mouth receyves
the fume that doth arise

Whom followeth streight his wife, and
doth the same full solemnly,
And of their children every one and all
their family."

Then they take up the "coles" and all,
and go around the house to complete the
"charm."

Following the popular observance of Twelfth Night which was much in vogue in old England and in France, a Twelfth Night Party might be given in our church-school program of social activities. I have had the privilege of carrying out such a program for some years. Father Christmas was the center of everything, introducing each separate procession as it appeared, the little New Year was present and rode out on the Christmas tree which was taken down, bound and drawn out by "yeomen." Associated with the New Year were the seasons, arrayed in costumes appropriate to their work in the world, an attractive float made out of a boy's cart being their conveyance. There was a procession for the Wassail Bearer, when the Wassail Song was sung; one for the Cake Cutter and the Apple Girls; for the King and Queen, — for in old England there was always a king and queen on this festival night, — and the "Court" was there, too, with its masked ladies, its knights who performed feats before the throne, and won the approbation of the court. All this is a delightful means of bringing to young people the customs of an earlier day far across the sea. Those who took part in the festivities, and those who looked on and longed to be a part of it, had a picture in their minds which would always color their reading of the popular presentation of Twelfth Night. A Twelfth Night party has interesting possibilities, and a Twelfth Night pageant on a Sunday nearest to the date would be equally appreciated, though each is different in purpose.

THE TOMBOY COUSIN by Barbara Ring contains the happy and amazing adventures of Town Mouse and Country Mouse, two little Norwegian cousins. Their nicknames are most appropriate, for Country Mouse — lively, warm-hearted, resourceful — is the "tomboy cousin": while Town Mouse, is the pale unimaginative city child, scarcely knowing at first what to make of her country cousin's hilariously amusing escapades and adventures. Country Mouse's first trip away from home to visit her grandfather and cousin — the journey of the two little girls to Denmark — these make a story which every boy and girl will understand and enjoy.

The Tomboy Cousin. By Barbara Ring. F. A. Stokes Co., New York, N. Y.

THE BEACON CLUB

The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

OCEAN BLUFF, MASS.

Dear Editor: I have started to write to the Club many times, but did not succeed, so I will write now and ask if I can join. I am very interested in the paper and get it every Sunday. I read the letters first. I go to the Unitarian Sunday School in Green Harbor. I should like some one to correspond with me. I am fourteen years of age.

Yours truly,

M. ELIZABETH BENNETT.

136 ALLSTON ST.,

WEST MEDFORD, MASS.

Dear Editor: I belong to the Beacon Club but I have no pin. I am enclosing a two-cent stamp for one. I should like to correspond with some one of my age. I am eleven years old. I get *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much. My teacher is Mrs. Walker; our minister is Rev. Mr. Dethlefs. I am a Girl Scout in Troop 8, and am in the Fifth Grade at the Brooks School. I have a tiger cat named "Clemenceau," an Airedale dog, and two goldfish.

Love from

ALLISON BRAYTON.

322 SPRING ST.,

PORTLAND, ME.

Dear Editor: I should like to belong to the Beacon Club and wear a pin. I go to the Unitarian Sunday School. I am eight years old. My minister's name is Rev. Vincent Silliman and my teacher's name is Miss Barrows. I should like to have some one who is my age write to me.

Yours truly,

LLOYD KNOX.

Other new members of our Club are,—Elizabeth Hand, Berkeley, Cal.; Tona Dagley, Bloomington, Ill.; Mary Archibald, Houlton, Me.; George Larson, Atwater, Minn.; Eleanor Jones, Hackensack, N. J.; Eleanor L. Graupner, Washington, D. C.

New members in Massachusetts are,—Dorothy Hebard, Belmont; Louise Coggeshall, Brewster; Jane Aechtler, Melrose; Gertrude Jenks, Newton Lower Falls; Calista White, Taunton; Chester Pinson, Rockland; Tom Aldrich, Robert Graham, Hildegarde Hunt, Aleck Smith, John Wolfe, George Wright, Winchester; Martha Ingalls, Winthrop; Harrison Leathe, Jr., Woburn.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Book Notes

BY ELSIE L. LUSTIG

A LITTLE BOOK OF DAYS, by Rachel Field (Doubleday, Page and Co.), has verses and pictures for all your favorite holidays — ranging from New Year's Day, St. Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas to Anybody's Birthday. Here is one about the First Day of School:

"Always more of everything;
Reading, writing, figuring;
Books to read and words to spell —
Hurry, Jim, there goes the bell!
Seems as if they might get through
Finding things for us to do!"

Did you ever hear of SKIPPING VILLAGE? Lois Lenski has given us this most attractive book which Stokes has just published. The end-papers, which you find when you first open this book are a map of the Town of Greenhill, showing places of interest such as "The pond — good skating here in the winter time," "Short cut to the Post Office," "Mostly weeds here." Inside — well you will just chuckle over the story of the James family, and Polly, and all the other jolly girls and freckled boys. Stories of hitching behind grocery wagons, waiting at the post office for mail, running to local fires, attending the annual Sunday-school picnic and spending summer afternoons in the swimming hole out at grandfather's farm.

In 1902 Laura E. Richards wrote CAPTAIN JANUARY (Page) and now we have STAR BRIGHT, a sequel. In CAPTAIN JANUARY, we have the story of the old captain at Storm Castle Lighthouse, and his beloved Star Bright, a dear little girl of ten years. The new volume tells how Star Bright's years have developed a most lovable personality, but at the same time a disconcerting frankness that disregards artificial convention. Her career at a fashionable boarding school has been cut short by unexpected events; but Star doesn't mind. She never ceases to long for her Daddy Captain and the Light, and in New York she meets a sailor who recalls many things that take her back to her childhood. You must read the book to find out how Star disappears, and what finally happens to her.

Puzzlers

Anagrams

The sentences here given will be found to contain exactly the same letters, differently arranged. Using these same letters, can you form a familiar saying?

O mince meat hours, cast cares by.
Each must be merry at occasions.

—*Youth's Companion*.

Twisted Animals

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Rulswa | 6. Alzrdi |
| 2. Eremiedr | 7. Geoghghed |
| 3. Slrreuq | 8. Lephtnae |
| 4. Babitr | 9. Praledo |
| 5. Leebe | 10. Smooe |

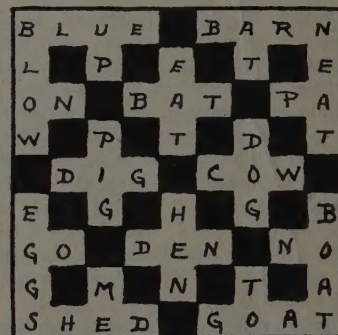
RACHEL CLARK.

Answer to Geographical Puzzle in No 10

Sydney and Charles; Tours; Ill.; Lucknow; Tampa (tamper); Sandwich; Salmon; Waterproof; Yuma (you may); North; Rattlesnake; United States; Marblehead; Bismarck; Pieher (pitcher); China; Red Bank; Kane (cane); Concord.

Answer to Puzzle in No. 12

The Farm.



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